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MONTANA

CENSUS OF FATAL OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES

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CENSUS OF FATAL OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES 1997

State of Montana
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INTRODUCTION

Thousands of workers in Montana are injured each year in work-related accidents. A number of these injuries result in death. Many of the accidents could probably have been avoided if employers and employees involved took proper safety measures to prevent the accidents.

This report provides information on fatal occupational accidents that occurred in Montana during 1997. The publication presents data gathered by the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI).

Employers are required to report occupational fatalities and multiple hospitalizations under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, and Title 29, Part 1904 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

- Within 48 hours after the occurrence of an employment accident which is fatal to one or more employees, or which results in hospitalization of five or more employees, the employer of any employees so injured or killed shall report the accident either orally or in writing to the nearest office of the Area Director of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor. The reporting may be by telephone or telegraph. The report shall relate the circumstances of the accident, the number of fatalities, and the extent of any injuries. The Area Director may require such additional reports in writing or otherwise as they deem necessary, concerning the accident.

Please note: Subcategories shown in charts may not add to total number of fatalities. Some data may not meet publishing criteria. Some subcategories are not shown separately.

BACKGROUND

CFOI is a federal/state cooperative program. The Office of Research and Analysis of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry collects the data in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

The CFOI program was developed with the following objectives in mind:

Comprehensive: Multiple data sources will make possible a complete roster of fatal occupational injuries, including the commonly excluded groups of the self-employed, those younger than 16, workers on small farms, and government employees.

Accurate: Was the fatality work related? Did it result from a sudden event? To help ensure that each fatality counted meets these criteria, data will be obtained from at least two independent sources, such as death certificates and workers' compensation claims.

Descriptive: In-depth profiles of the deceased and how they died can be developed from the database, once the accuracy of those characteristics is ensured. Such assurances come from cross-checking source documents and, when appropriate, initiating other inquiries.

Timely: Data will be compiled and issued annually just a few months after each reference year. Timely national and state publications are anticipated.

Accessible: Once proper safeguards are in place to guarantee the confidentiality of individuals and companies, the fatality database will be made readily accessible to safety and health researchers, policy officials, and other interested parties.

The CFOI program can be useful in tracking trends of workplace hazards as the data is a timely, comprehensive, and detailed census of work-related fatalities. Priorities for safety inspections and follow-up visits could be established using CFOI data.

DEFINITIONS

The CFOI program is a census, meaning that all cases meeting program definitions are included. Fatalities occurring in the private and public sectors, military, self-employed, and certain volunteers are counted in the program.

CFOI data is collected and verified using at least two sources. Arrangements have been made with county, state, and federal agencies to receive necessary documents. Source documents include death certificate information, Occupational Safety and Health Administration investigative reports, workers' compensation forms, newspaper articles, coroner reports, highway patrol accident reports, follow-up questionnaires from employers, etc.

The CFOI program collects information on all occupational injury fatalities occurring in Montana. For a fatality to be in scope for CFOI, the decedent must have been employed (working for pay or other compensation) at the time of the incident, and engaged in a work activity or present at the site of the incident as a condition of his or her employment.

For injuries, the death must have occurred in Montana during the current year (1997). The injury must be work related according to the record keeping guidelines of the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

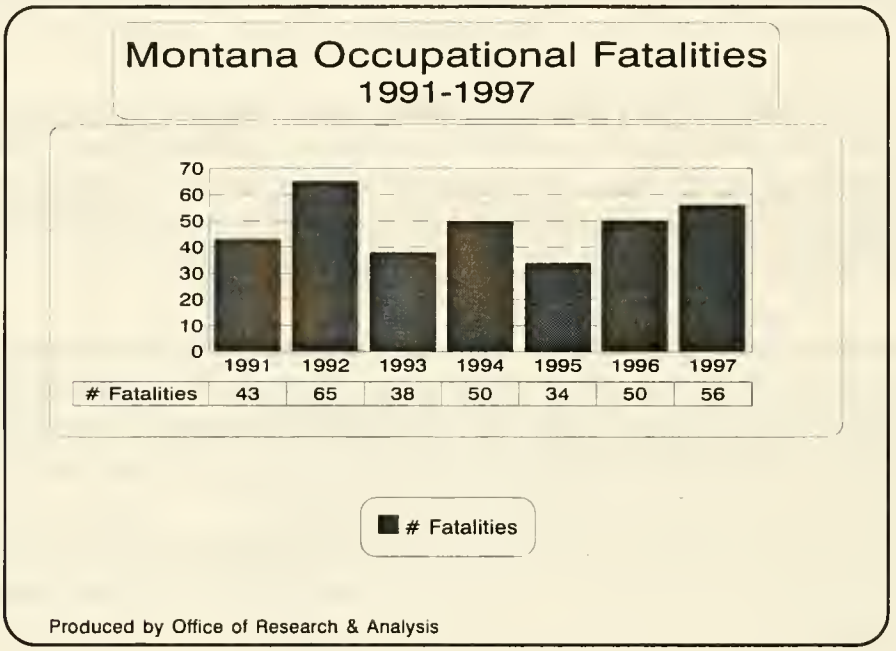
Data include deaths occurring during 1997 that resulted from traumatic occupational injuries. An injury is defined as any intentional or unintentional wound or damage to the body resulting from acute exposure to energy, such as heat or electricity or kinetic energy from a crash, or from the absence of such essentials as heat or oxygen caused by a specific event or incident or series of events within a single workday or shift. Included are open wounds, intracranial and internal injuries, heatstroke, hypothermia, asphyxiation, acute poisonings resulting from a short-term exposure (limited to the worker's shift), suicides and homicides, and work injuries listed as underlying or contributory causes of death.

In addition to fatal injuries, those fatal occupational illnesses that are recognized as work related are counted. For illnesses, the death must have occurred in Montana during the current year (1997). Either the illness causing the death must be work related according to the CFOI criteria, or the illness causing the death must have occurred at work.

Occupational illnesses include any abnormal condition or disorder, other than one resulting from an occupational injury, caused by exposure to environmental factors associated with employment or manifesting themselves in the workplace.

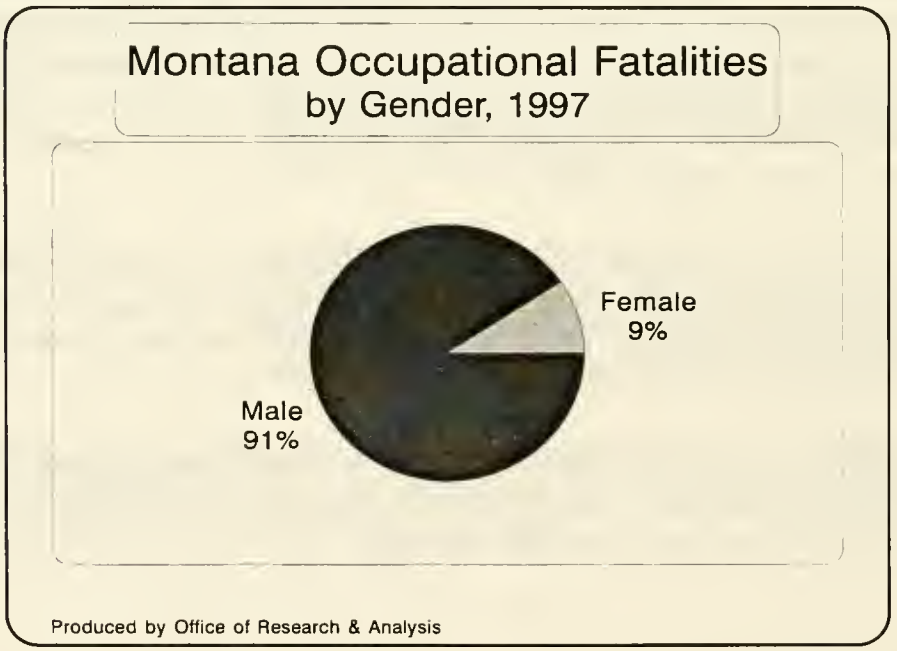
CHARACTERISTICS OF FATAL OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES

On-the-job injuries resulted in the deaths of 56 workers in Montana during 1997. There were approximately 433,000 workers in Montana during the year. This translates to 12.9 fatalities per 100,000 workers, much higher than the national rate of 4.8 fatalities per 100,000 workers.



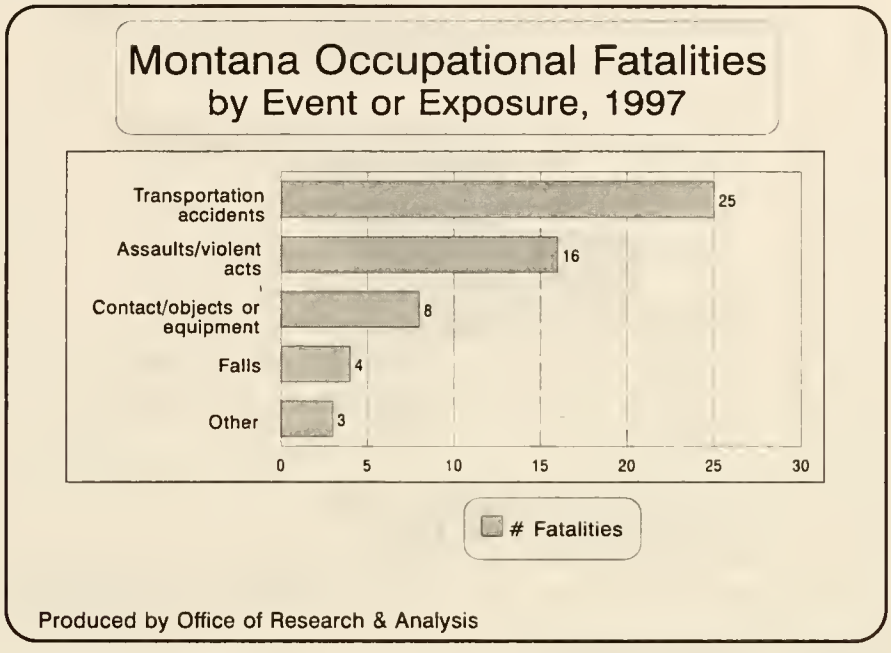
Gender

Five women and 51 men were fatally injured in 1997.



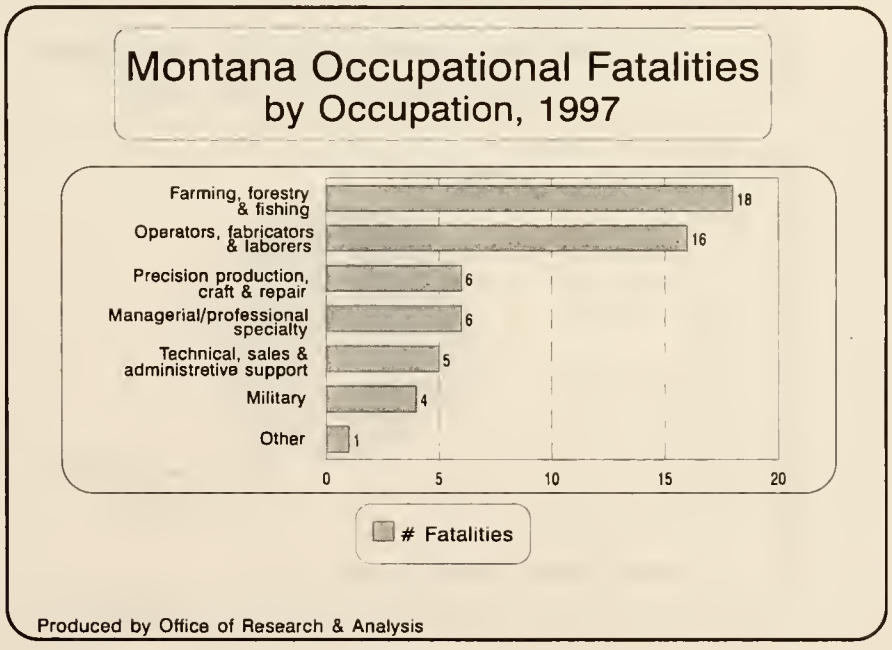
Event or Exposure

Transportation accidents led all other fatal events, accounting for 45 percent of 1997's fatal occupational injuries. Assaults and violent acts accounted for 29 percent of the total fatalities, most of these being self-inflicted injury. Fatalities caused by contact with objects and equipment made up 14 percent of the 1997 fatalities.



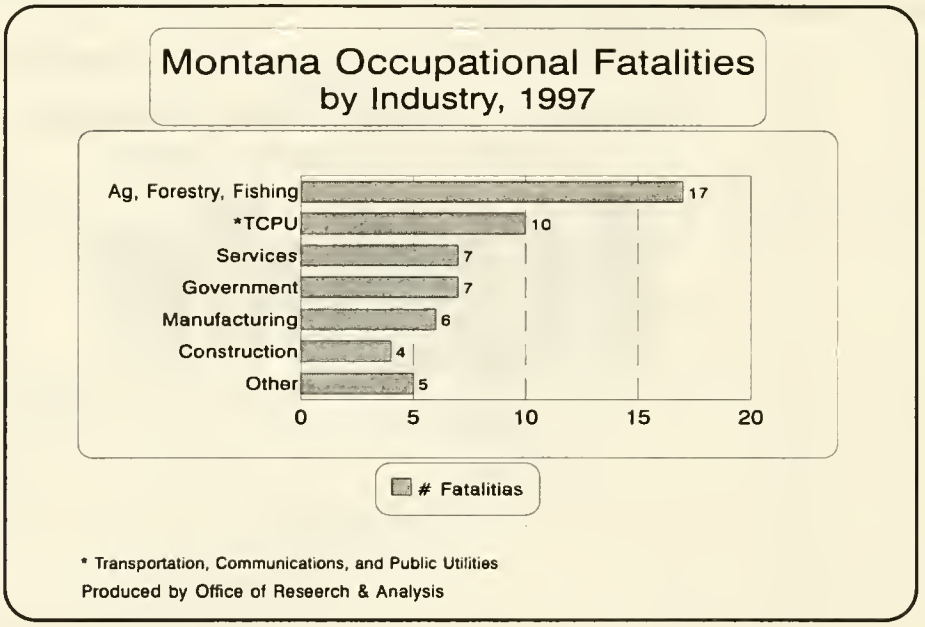
Fatalities by Occupation

Occupations with the largest number of worker fatalities were farming, forestry, and fishing workers. Sixteen of these workers were farmers and farmworkers.



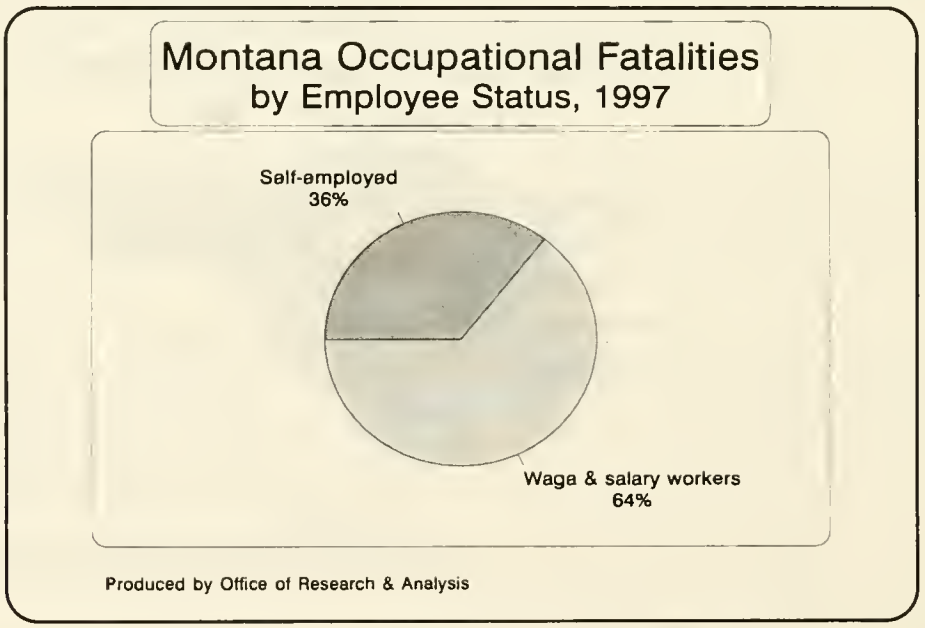
Fatalities by Industry

Seventeen occupational fatalities were reported in Montana's agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry in 1997. Transportation, communications and public utilities (TCPU) had 10 worker fatalities. Both services and government reported seven work fatalities.



Fatalities by Employee Status

The self-employed and those working in family businesses accounted for 36 percent of 1997's workplace fatalities in Montana.



Fatalities by Age

The census showed that 68 percent of fatally injured workers in Montana were 25 to 54 years old. Ten workers were 24 years of age or younger. Eight workers were 55 years of age or older.

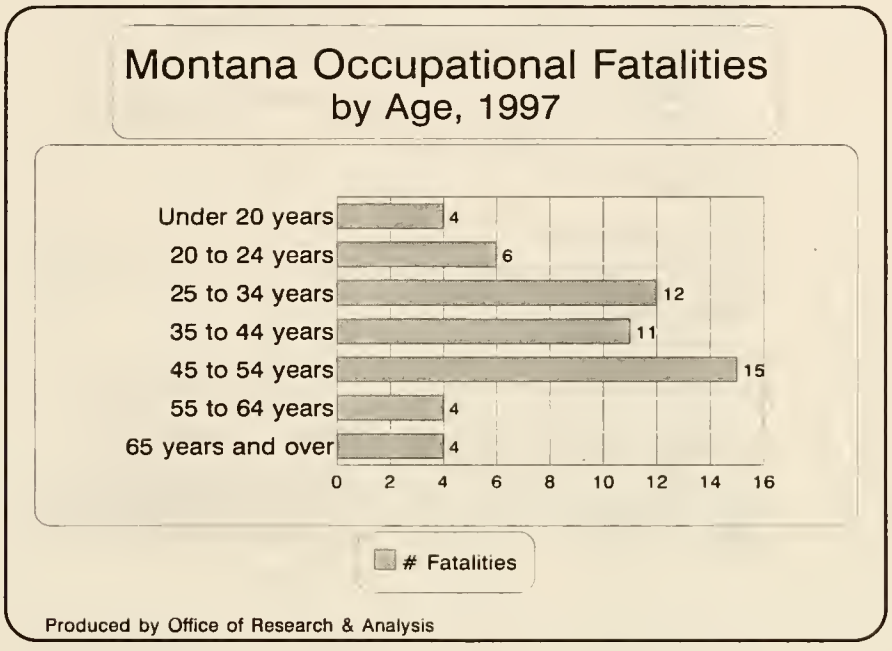


Table 1. Fatal occupational injuries by event or exposure, Montana, 1997

Event[1]	Fatalities	
	Number	Percent
Total	56	100
Transportation incidents	25	45
Highway	12	21
Vehicle struck stationary object or equipment on side of road	3	5
Noncollision	6	11
Jack-knifed or overturned--no collision	5	9
Nonhighway (farm, industrial premises)	4	7
Noncollision accident	4	7
Overturned	4	7
Aircraft	8	14
Assaults and violent acts	16	29
Self-inflicted injury	14	25
Contact with objects and equipment	8	14
Struck by object	6	11
Struck by falling object	4	7
Falls	4	7

[1] Based on the 1992 BLS Occupational Injury and Illness Classification Structures.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 1997.

Table 2. Fatal occupational injuries by selected characteristics, Montana, 1997

Worker characteristics	Fatalities	
	Number	Percent
Total	56	100
Employee status		
Wage and salary workers[1]	36	64
Self-employed[2]	20	36
Sex		
Men	51	91
Women	5	9
Age		
Under 20 years	4	7
20 to 24 years	6	11
25 to 34 years	12	21
35 to 44 years	11	20
45 to 54 years	15	27
55 to 64 years	4	7
65 years and over	4	7
Race		
White	55	98

[1] May include volunteers and other workers receiving compensation.

[2] Includes paid and unpaid family workers, and may include owners of incorporated businesses, or members of partnerships.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 1997.

Table 3. Fatal occupational injuries by occupation, Montana, 1997

Occupation[1]	Fatalities	
	Number	Percent
Total	56	100
Managerial and professional specialty	6	11
Professional specialty	4	7
Engineers, architects, and surveyors	3	5
Architects	3	5
Technical, sales, and administrative support	5	9
Sales occupations	3	5
Farming, forestry, and fishing	18	32
Farming operators and managers	9	16
Farmers, except horticultural	9	16
Other agricultural and related occupations	7	12
Farm occupations, except managerial	7	12
Farm workers	7	12
Precision production, craft, and repair	6	11
Mechanics and repairers	4	7
Mechanics and repairers, except supervisors	4	7
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	16	29
Transportation and material moving occupations	13	23
Motor vehicle operators	11	20
Truck drivers	11	20
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	3	5
Military occupations	4	7

[1] Based on the 1990 Occupational Classification System developed by the Bureau of the Census.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 1997.

Table 4. Fatal occupational injuries by industry, Montana, 1997

Industry[1]	Fatalities	
	Number	Percent
Total	56	100
Private industry	49	88
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	17	30
Agricultural production - crops	13	23
Field crops, except cash grains	13	23
Field crops, except grains, nec	13	23
Agricultural production - livestock	3	5
Livestock, except dairy and poultry	3	5
Beef cattle, except feedlots	3	5
Construction	4	7
Manufacturing	6	11
Lumber and wood products	3	5
Transportation and public utilities	10	18
Trucking and warehousing	9	16
Trucking and courier services, except air	9	16
Trucking, except local	9	16
Services	7	12
Engineering and management services	3	5
Engineering and architectural services	3	5
Architectural services	3	5
Government[2]	7	12

[1] *Standard Industrial Classification Manual, 1987.*

[2] Includes fatalities to workers employed by governmental organizations regardless of industry.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 1997.

NATIONAL CENSUS OF FATAL OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES, 1997

A total of 6,218 fatal work injuries occurred in the United States in 1997, according to the National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries.

Highway traffic incidents and homicides continued to lead all other fatal events. These two events totaled over just a third of the work injury deaths that occurred during 1997.

Work-related highway deaths accounted for 22 percent of the fatal workplace injuries reported in 1997. Almost half of the highway fatality victims were employed as truck drivers or in other jobs operating motor vehicles as a profession.

Homicide was the second leading cause of job-related death, accounting for 14 percent of the fatally injured workers in 1997.

Occupations with large numbers of worker fatalities included truck drivers, construction trades, farm occupations, and sales occupations.

The construction industry accounted for about one out of every six fatal work injuries that occurred during 1997.

Industry divisions with large numbers of fatalities relative to their employment include agriculture, forestry, and fishing; construction; transportation and public utilities; and mining.

On average, about 17 workers were killed each day during 1997.

Eighty-four percent of the fatally injured workers died the day they were injured; 97 percent died within 30 days.

There were 220 multiple fatality incidents (incidents that resulted in two or more worker deaths) resulting in 544 job-related deaths in 1997.

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